

can be taken to ensure that the dose is estimated accurately and that expert medical evaluation is provided.

Although it is very technical, this commentary is well written and unambiguous. It provides a valuable reference for ensuring safe medical care for patients when radiation exposure occurs and serves to reduce unnecessary radiation exposure in the current population and future generations.

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THE FAMILY HEALTH GUIDE TO HOMEOPATHY

Barry Rose. 307 pp. Illust. Celestial Arts Publishing, Berkeley, Calif.; Fitzhenry and Whiteside, Markham, Ont. 1993. \$48.95. ISBN 0-89087-695-9

Overall rating: Fair

Strengths: Attractive format and illustrations

Weaknesses: Outmoded

Audience: Lay readers

This attractively illustrated coffee-table book is one of a small throng of new books produced to meet the growing interest in homeopathy.

It is comprised of two sections, the first on treatment and the second a materia medica of 1000 commonly used remedies (there are now approximately 2000). This is a fairly standard format for the genre. The writing style appears to be aimed at a grade-five reading level.

The book contains minimal information on the principles of homeopathy and not much more on the practice. Lip service is paid to the necessity of melding orthodox medical treatment with homeopathy.

The knowledge base and understanding of homeopathy has pro-

gressed substantially over the past two decades; however, this is not at all apparent from the information presented in this book. This outmoded presentation is disappointing.

There are several other books that better represent this subject; therefore, this book is not recommended.

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THE HEALTH OF NATIVE AMERICANS: TOWARD A BIOCULTURAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

T. Kue Young. 265 pp. Illust. Oxford University Press, New York. 1994. \$69.95. ISBN 0-19-507339-8

Overall rating: Excellent

Strengths: Comprehensive, extensive bibliography

Weaknesses: Too many charts, figures and numbers

Audience: Graduate students in epidemiology and anthropology, policy makers and service planners working in aboriginal health

This book integrates anthropologic and epidemiologic approaches to demonstrate the interaction of biologic and cultural factors in disease causation, distribution and control. This dual perspective offers a promising approach to understanding and improving the health status of native Americans and Canadians. The author, a public health physician with a master's degree in behavioural sciences, has practised in remote native communities. Above all, T. Kue Young is an acknowledged scholar of aboriginal health and is well suited to the task of writing such a book.

In the first of the book's seven chapters, the author provides an overview of North American native peoples, their origin and genetic diversity, their historical development in relation to European colonization of the continent and their present so-

cioeconomic conditions. Chapter 2 examines the population health of native people in Canada and the United States. The next four chapters deal with specific disease groups: infectious diseases, chronic diseases, injuries and social problems such as alcohol and substance abuse. Each of these chapters outlines the magnitude of the problem in Canada and the United States, the known causes of and risk factors for the diseases in question and the prevention and control strategies for these diseases. The final chapter is a polemic on the need for a joint approach, involving anthropology and epidemiology, to the study of aboriginal health.

In his usual pedantic fashion, Young thoroughly reviews the literature; an extensive bibliography is one of the major assets of the book. The facts are presented and interpreted accurately.

The quality of the presentation is generally excellent. The quantity of graphs, diagrams, tables and numbers is distracting; however, the author maintains the flow of the text. The quality of some of the graphs and diagrams could have been better.

This book is suitable for graduate students interested in anthropology and the epidemiologic aspects of diseases in special population groups. It is a useful reference for native and nonnative people and organizations involved in the planning and delivery of aboriginal health care services in Canada and the United States. To my knowledge there is no other book that examines the health status and epidemiologic factors of major diseases in Canadian and US native people; therefore, this book is an excellent addition to the library of anyone in the field.

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